UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.241/25
19 May 1994

ENGLISH
Original: ENGLISH

INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR
THE ELABORATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION IN THOSE COUNTRIES
EXPERIENCING SERIOUS DROUGHT AND/OR
DESERTIFICATION, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA
Fifth Session
Paris, 6-17 June 1994
Agenda item 2

ELABORATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION IN COUNTRIES EXPERIENCING SERIOUS DROUGHT AND/OR DESERTIFICATION, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA

Negotiating text of the regional implementation annex for Asia

Note by the Secretariat

1. At its fourth session in Geneva, the INCD requested the Secretariat to draft for its fifth session in Paris the negotiating text of a regional implementation annex for Asia, based on document A/AC.241/CRP.8 submitted by India on behalf of Asian countries. The text is attached for the Committee's consideration.

2. In preparing the negotiating text, the Secretariat took into careful consideration statements by INCD members on this issue during the fourth session. The Secretariat also drew on written submissions received from Governments after that session, containing additional comments and drafting proposals. Finally, the Secretariat benefited from discussion of the text during the sixth meeting of the International Panel of Experts on Desertification.

Annex

REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION ANNEX FOR ASIA

Article 1

Purpose

The purpose of the present annex is to provide guidelines and arrangements for the practical and effective implementation of the Convention in affected country Parties of Asia in light of the particular conditions of that region.

Article 2

Particular conditions of the Asian region

In carrying out their obligations pursuant to the provisions of the Convention, the Parties shall take into consideration the following particular conditions which apply in varying degrees to affected countries of Asia:

(a) The large proportion of affected areas in their territories and the broad diversity of these areas with regard to climate, topography, land use and socio-economic systems;

(b) The large populations, which rely on natural resources for livelihoods, and high population growth rates;

(c) The existence of unsustainable production systems, directly related to widespread poverty, leading to land degradation and to pressure on scarce water resources;

(d) The significant impact on them of conditions in the world economy and the incidence of environmentally displaced persons;

(e) Their growing, but still insufficient, capacity and institutional frameworks to deal with national desertification problems and to cooperate with each other; and

(f) Their need for international cooperation, including assistance, to pursue sustainable development objectives relating to combating desertification.

Article 3

Framework for national action programmes

1. National action programmes shall be an integral part of broader national policies for sustainable development of affected country Parties of Asia.

2. A consultative and participatory process involving appropriate levels of government, local communities and non-governmental organizations shall be undertaken to provide guidance on a strategy with flexible planning to allow maximum local participation. As appropriate, bilateral and multilateral cooperation agencies may be involved in this process at the request of the affected country Party concerned.

Article 4

Timetable for preparation of action programmes

Affected country Parties of the region shall finalize the preparation of their national action programmes, and, as appropriate, subregional and/or joint action programmes, as soon as practicable.

Article 5

National action programmes

1. In preparing and implementing national action programmes in accordance with Articles 9 and 10 and other relevant provisions of the Convention, each affected country Party of the region shall, inter alia, as appropriate:

(a) Designate appropriate bodies responsible for the preparation, coordination and implementation of its programme;

(b) Involve affected populations, including local communities, in the elaboration, coordination and implementation of the programme through a locally driven consultative process, with the cooperation of local authorities and relevant non-governmental organizations;

(c) Survey the state of the environment in affected areas to assess the causes and consequences of desertification and to determine priority areas for action;

(d) Evaluate, with the participation of affected communities, past and current programmes for combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought, in order to design a strategy and elaborate activities in the programme;

(e) Prepare technical and financial programmes translating the information obtained through the activities in subparagraphs (a) to (d);

(f) Develop and utilize procedures and benchmarks for evaluating implementation of the programme; and

(g) Formulate in a spirit of partnership, where international cooperation, including assistance, is involved, appropriate arrangements supporting the programme.

2. Consistent with Article 10 of the Convention, the overall strategy of national programmes shall feature integrated local development programmes for affected areas, based on participatory mechanisms and on integration of strategies for poverty eradication into efforts to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought. Sectoral measures in the programmes shall be grouped in priority fields which take account of the broad diversity of affected areas in the region referred to in Article 2 (a), and of Article 10, paragraph 4 of the Convention.

Article 6

Subregional and joint action programmes

1. In accordance with Article 11 of the Convention, affected country Parties of a given subregion in Asia may agree to prepare and implement a subregional action programme in order to complement and increase the efficiency of national action programmes. Selected affected country Parties in a subregion, or of the region as a whole, may also similarly agree to joint action programmes among them. In either case, the relevant Parties may jointly agree to entrust subregional or national organizations, or specialized institutions, with responsibilities relating to the preparation, coordination and implementation of programmes. Such organizations or institutions may also act as focal points and centres for the promotion and coordination of technical cooperation in accordance with Articles 16 to 18 of the Convention.

2. In preparing and implementing subregional or joint action programmes, affected country Parties of the region shall, inter alia, as appropriate:

(a) Identify, in cooperation with national institutions, national objectives related to desertification and drought which can better be met by such programmes, as well as relevant activities which could be effectively carried out through them;

(b) Evaluate the operational capacities and activities of relevant subregional and national institutions;

(c) Assess existing programmes relating to desertification and drought among all or some parties in a subregion and their relationship with national programmes; and

(d) Formulate in a spirit of partnership, where international cooperation, including assistance, is involved, appropriate bilateral and/or multilateral arrangements supporting the programmes.

3. Subregional or joint action programmes may include measures for the sustainable management of transboundary natural resources, priorities for coordination and other activities in the fields of capacity building, scientific and technical cooperation, particularly drought early warning systems and information sharing, and means of strengthening or adding to the capacity of relevant subregional and other organizations or institutions.

Article 7

Regional activities

Regional activities to enhance measures in subregional or joint action programmes may include, inter alia, consultations, capacity building and training activities and systems for sharing expertise, relevant technology, know-how and information, particularly regarding institutional and legal reforms and mechanisms for popular participation.

Article 8

Financial resources and mechanisms

1. The Parties shall ensure that the relative importance of desertification and drought in Asia is reflected in the mobilization of financial resources under Article 20 of the Convention and in the use of financial mechanisms pursuant to Article 21 of the Convention. To this end, they shall work together to strengthen, as necessary, the capacity of United Nations agencies, as well as international financial institutions, to support the national, subregional and joint action programmes of affected country Parties in Asia.

2. Those Parties which are members of the governing bodies of relevant regional and subregional financial institutions, including the Asian Development Bank, shall promote efforts to give due priority in the activities of these institutions to sustainable development programmes intended to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought.

Article 9

Coordination mechanisms

1. Affected country Parties of the region shall, through the national institutions designated pursuant to Article 5 (a), coordinate the preparation, negotiation and implementation of national and subregional or joint action programmes. They may involve, as appropriate, other Parties and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in this process. Such coordination shall, inter alia, seek to secure agreement on opportunities for international cooperation in accordance with Articles 20 and 21, enhance technical cooperation, and channel resources so that they are used effectively.

2. Arrangements for cooperation may include the establishment of a consultative group or groups comprising affected country Parties belonging to concerned subregions or a group of affected country Parties of the region, developed country Parties, other Parties as appropriate, and relevant global, regional and subregional organizations, including non-governmental organizations. Among its functions, the consultative group or groups may:

(a) Offer advice on and identify sources of and opportunities for financial and technical cooperation in the preparation and implementation of national, subregional and joint action programmes, make appropriate arrangements for such cooperation, and serve as a forum for the conclusion of relevant bilateral/multilateral agreements;

(b) Assist relevant country Parties to provide the Conference of the Parties with relevant information, pursuant to Article 26 of the Convention, and assist in the preparation of an inventory of the flow of funds in accordance with Article 21 of the Convention; and

(c) Perform other mutually agreed tasks.